

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

SEPTEMBER 15, 2009

Request for PCMS Follow-up Report

On May 20, 2008, the Board of Supervisors (Board) considered the issue that a large number of juvenile probationers were Absent Without Leave (AWOL) after being placed in group homes by the Probation Department. The rate of AWOL minors for such placements was at an unacceptable level. The Board was also concerned that minors who were AWOL posed a safety risk to themselves, as was illustrated by a minor who was found dead on May 8, 2008, while AWOL for ten days from a suitable placement order. The Board was also concerned that the Probation Department did not establish a dedicated unit to diligently and consistently locate minors who were on AWOL status from group homes or who were on bench warrant status in the community.

Therefore, on May 20, 2008, the Board unanimously adopted a motion to examine these issues. The Board directed the CEO, in conjunction with the Chief Probation Officer, to accomplish the following:

- MORE -

MOTION

MOLINA _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

ANTONOVICH _____

KNABE _____

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- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the existing AWOL policy and procedures, including, but not limited to, factors such as the status of all AWOL minors and a determination of the length of time each minor had been AWOL;
- Work with the Director of the Department and Family Services (DCFS) to perform a review of existing DCFS Runaway Adolescent Program's policies and procedures to identify best practices to be implemented at the Probation Department to enhance its current model for dealing with AWOL minors; and
- Instruct the CEO to work in concert with the County Counsel, the Director of DCFS, the Coroner, and the Inter-agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect, to incorporate and /or replicate DCFS' current child death notification process(es) to the Board in all instances involving the death of minors under the care or supervision of the Probation Department.

The Probation Department has since implemented the first phase of the Probation Case Management System (PCMS), which consolidated a number of data bases and case management systems within the Probation Department. Through this PCMS, Deputy Probation Officers have access to all records and action taken regarding juveniles within the probation system. However, preliminary discussions with representatives of the Probation Department seem to indicate that PCMS is not without limitations.

I THEREFORE MOVE, THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Instruct the Chief Executive Officer, in concert with the Chief of the Probation Department, to prepare a written report within thirty days on the following:

1. The status of the implementation of the Probation Case Management System (PCMS), and the ability to track AWOLs and bench warrants through the PCMS;
2. Whether, by utilizing data from PCMS, summary reports can be generated on the number of AWOL youth from group homes at any given time, and if possible, to generate a report from January 1, 2009 through August 31, 2009;
3. Whether, by utilizing data from PCMS, detailed reports can be generated to identify the number of youth on bench warrant status, address of residence, supervisorial district, bench warrant issue date, bench warrant recall date, amount of time on a bench warrant, and total number of bench warrants, and if possible, prepare such a report with the address of the residences redacted.
4. Status of the Bench Warrant Unit (Unit), whether the Unit is still in operation, the number of personnel in the Unit, and whether it is now deployed to pursue, search for, or locate youths on AWOL status and include a summary of the Unit's activities, including the number of youth located and returned from January 1, 2009 to August 31, 2009. If the Unit is no longer in operation, the report should include to which unit within the Probation Department is now responsible for performing these tasks.

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I FURTHER MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Direct the lead attorney of the Children's Special Investigation Unit to include in her confidential report the results of an investigation into the death of Lazhane S., a child under the jurisdiction of DCFS, pursuant to the motion approved by the Board dated August 18, 2009, and to include any information concerning all possible contact this child may have had with the Probation Department and/or any other law enforcement entity.

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